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Canadian Series of Booklets

Aca Nada

BY

KAY LIVINGSTON

THE COPP, CLARK COMPANY, Limited, TORONTO

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With the Compliments of the Season

From

To

Aca Nada

A doubtful tradition asserts that the name, Canada, is derived from these Spanish words, signifying "nothing here," from the fact that the first explorers were disappointed in their hope of finding gold.

Long ago a band of travellers
Left behind the coast of Spain.
Turned their faces to the westward,
Sailed across the storm-tossed main,
Crossed the black Atlantic waters,
Landed on a rock-bound shore,
Moored their argosies and left them,
That the land they might explore.
Sadly turned they homeward, murmuring,
"Aca Nada!" nothing here.

Nothing here! my Canada?
Nay but we have wiser grown;
Stretching vast from dawn to sunset,
With a grandeur all thine own!
Rugged mountains, where the eagle
Wheels in widening circles slow;
Mighty hills whose peaked summits,
Covered with eternal snow,
Stand like angel sentinels guarding
Far and wide the land below!

Trackless forests, dark and lonely,
Where man's foot hath never trod;
Howls the wolf, and screams the panther,
Face to face with Nature's God!

Here the haughty stag advancing,
Kingly power undaunted sways;
Here the timid hare bounds fearless
Through the brushwood underways;
In his native marsh the heron
Seeks the waters of his love,
While in geometric figure
Sail the wild-duck far above.
Company of man disturbs not,
All in careless freedom rove!

Lakes and streamlets ever changing,
Yet in beauty changeless still
As when Chaos and Old Night
Bent obedient to His will!
Stately rivers, onward rolling
Ever to the restless sea.
On thine azure bosoms heaving
White-winged barques ride daintily,
Laden low with grain so golden,
Ceres laughs in happy glee.

Where of yore, by tideless waters,
Pines their solemn shadows threw,
Curls the graceful smoke from homesteads,
Men their thrifty lives pursue.
Where in bygone years the forest
Shuddered with the tempest's roar,
Spreads now many a stately city:
Solitude returns no more!
Happy country! happy people!
Peace prevails from shore to shore.

Dear my country! thee I love
Better than my tongue can tell:
Land of peace and plenty, ever
In my heart thy name shall dwell!
Birds of evil omen many
Croak of poverty and care,
Fancy in them loves to wander
Through the mazes of despair.
Dear our country is and lovely,
And though night be dark and long,
Evening red-lit clouds betoken
Morning sunshine bright and strong!